and out of these, the number of contracts given to the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;

(b) the terms and conditions of allotting stalls|contracts and the period for which these are allotted; and

(c) what are the other categories of persons for whom there is reservation for allotment of said contracts|stalls?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(b) The main terms & conditions are that the persons applying for the licence should have sufficient experience, general capability to manage the unit, sound financial standing and character. Smaller contracts of 1|2 units are exclusively reserved for SCs|STs in whose case experience is not insisted upon. The normal tenure of these contracts is 5 years.

(c) There is no reservation for any other category except SCs|STs.

Running of trains between Hyderabad Secunderabad to Tirupati

1406. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of trains running between Hyderabad|Secunderabad and Tirupati:

(b) whether there is any proposal to run more Express Trains on the above route; and

(c) i fso, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Three pairs.

(b) No. Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Special subsidies to Jammu & Kashmir for essential commodities

407. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that essential commodities viz. rice, pulses, edible oils, LPG, kerosens, coal; petrol; diesel etc. have been made available in Jammu & Kashmir at special subsidised rates;

(b) if so, comparative details of current prices of said items in Jammu & Kashmir with those in other places in India; and

(c) the justifications for continuing with such special subsidies?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI NATHU RAM MIRDHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Non-implementation of Eklakhi-Balurbhat Rail Link

1408. PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the hardships being faced by a large number of people for non-implementation of Eklakhi-Balurghat rail link; and

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any decision to implement the scheme at an early date?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Due to acute constraint of resources for new line projects, it has not been possible to recommence work on this project.

Steps to curb contract labour

1409. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any effective steps to curb contract labour, which is growing unchecked; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?